

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

In accordance with the helpful comments of the Examiner, the drawings have been amended as reflected on the attached Replacement Sheets. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS

With the entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-8 are pending in the application.

The claims have been amended to place them in more conventional US patent claim format and based on the helpful comments of the Examiner. No new matter has been added.

The drawings have been amended as requested by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Applicants submit that the drawing amendments obviate the drawing objections.

In response to the obviousness-type double patenting rejections, and without agreeing with the rejections, applicants submit herewith two Terminal Disclaimers that obviate the rejections.

In response to the rejection of claims 1-8 under Section 112, second paragraph, with respect to the claim term "thin," and without agreeing with the rejection, applicants have deleted the term "thin" from the claims, which obviates the rejection.

The following prior art rejections have been lodged:

1. In paragraph numbers 11-15 on pages 9-10 of the Detailed Action, claims 1, 4 and 5 stand rejected as allegedly being obvious over Kawaguchi (JP 02098415).
2. In paragraph numbers 16-19 on pages 10-11 of the Detailed Action, claim 3 stands rejected as allegedly being obvious over Kawaguchi in view of Akiyama (US Published Application No. 2002/0182351).
3. In paragraph numbers 20-27 on pages 11-13 of the Detailed Action, claims 6-8 stand rejected as allegedly being obvious over Kawaguchi in view of Langecker (U.S. Patent 4,883,630).

4. In paragraph numbers 28-33 on pages 13-14 of the Detailed Action, claim 8 stands rejected as allegedly being obvious over Kawaguchi in view of O'Mara (U.S. Patent 4,390,487).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for at least the following reasons.

The primary reference, Kawaguchi, does not disclose or suggest the claimed invention. As correctly stated in the attached International Preliminary Report on Patentability for applicants' corresponding PCT application, the Kawaguchi reference does not disclose or suggest that the spacing between the functional layer and the axis of symmetry is variable (as claimed in each of the independent claims). This is a critical claim element and distinction that is nowhere disclosed or suggested in Kawaguchi or the secondary references. Moreover, the claimed invention enhances the barrier properties of the multilayer object. The claimed invention that attains this result as well as the objective of the claimed invention is not disclosed, suggested or even appreciated by Kawaguchi or any of the secondary references. Thus, the claimed invention is not obvious in view of the cited art. For at least these reasons, applicants request the withdrawal of the prior art rejections.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, and the attached documents, applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

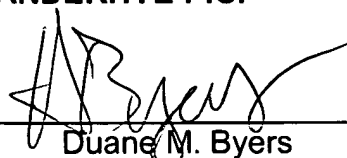
If the Examiner has any questions, the undersigned may be contacted at 703-816-4009.

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Respectfully submitted,

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